

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A stringed instrument comprising:
a body having a front surface and a rear surface;
a tuning mechanism;
a neck having one end joined to said body and an opposite end retaining said tuning mechanism;
a retainer block encompassed by said rear surface; and
a plurality of strings each having a first end secured to said tuning mechanism; and a second end retained by said retainer block.
2. A stringed instrument according to claim 1 including a bridge mounted on said front surface and wherein said strings extend from said tuning mechanism, over said bridge, and through said body to said block.
3. A stringed instrument according to claim 2 wherein said retainer block has an inner surface and an outer surface and defines a plurality of channels extending between said inner and outer surfaces, and each of said strings passes through a different one of said channels.
4. A stringed instrument according to claim 3 wherein said second ends are enlarged to prevent passage through said channels.
5. A stringed instrument according to claim 4 wherein each of said channels comprises a counterbore in said outer surface retaining one of said enlarged second ends.

6. A stringed instrument according to claim 1 wherein said block is unitary and made of brass.

7. A stringed instrument according to claim 6 including a bridge mounted on said front surface and wherein said strings extend from said tuning mechanism, over said bridge, and through said body to said block.

8. A stringed instrument according to claim 7 wherein said retainer block has an inner surface and an outer surface and defines a plurality of channels extending between said inner and outer surfaces, each of said strings passes through a different one of said channels.

9. A stringed instrument according to claim 8 wherein said second ends are enlarged to prevent passage through said channels.

10. A stringed instrument according to claim 9 wherein each of said channels comprises a counterbore in said outer surface retaining one of said enlarged second ends.

11. A stringed instrument according to claim 3 wherein said body defines a cavity retaining said block and intersecting said rear surface.

12. A stringed instrument according to claim 11 wherein said second ends are enlarged to prevent passage through said channels.

13. A stringed instrument according to claim 12 wherein each of said channels comprises a counterbore in said outer surface retaining one of said enlarged second ends.

14. A stringed instrument according to claim 11 wherein said block is unitary and made of brass.

15. A stringed instrument according to claim 14 wherein said second ends are enlarged to prevent passage through said channels.

16. A stringed instrument according to claim 15 wherein each of said channels comprises a counterbore in said outer surface retaining one of said enlarged second ends.